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Ely Fuel, a 42 years old mother of 5 children, in Bobo-Dioulasso, in the Southwest of Burkina Faso. Ely is breastfeeding and cuddling her youngest, Titian, 3 weeks old.

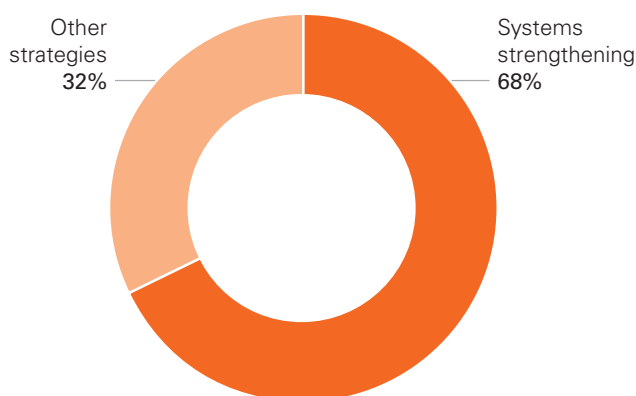
**Spotlight on the
Global HIV and AIDS
Thematic Fund**

Results achieved in 2023 to achieve an AIDS-free future for children and adolescents

Financial results

UNICEF’s Global HIV and AIDS Thematic Fund is a flexible funding pool that enables the organization to strengthen systems to ensure an AIDS-free future for children and adolescents.

Thanks to generous donors, in 2023 UNICEF’s Global HIV and AIDS Thematic Fund received almost \$6.1 million. UNICEF is grateful for this support.



* Other strategies include advocacy and communications; social and behaviour change; data and research; innovation; partnerships and engagement; humanitarian and development nexus; and support to programme delivery.

The chart above illustrates how global thematic expenses are distributed across eight of UNICEF’s nine implementing strategies for programming on HIV and AIDS, noting that multiple strategies are used to achieve results. In 2023, systems strengthening continued to be a core focus of HIV work, accounting for 68 per cent of all expenses.

Through its systems-strengthening work, UNICEF addresses both the immediate challenges faced by children, adolescents and pregnant women living with HIV, and the structural factors such as poverty, lack of education and gender-based violence (GBV) that increase the risks of HIV infection for children, adolescents and young people. This means ensuring access to quality health services that are responsive to the unique needs of children and

Partner Type	Partner	Total (US\$)
Public sector	Balance from previous year	12,368
Private sector	Korean Committee for UNICEF	4,935,873
	Canadian UNICEF Committee	520,693
	Dutch Committee for UNICEF	317,526
	Finnish Committee for UNICEF	254,690
	Norwegian Committee for UNICEF	22,967
Grand Total		6,064,118

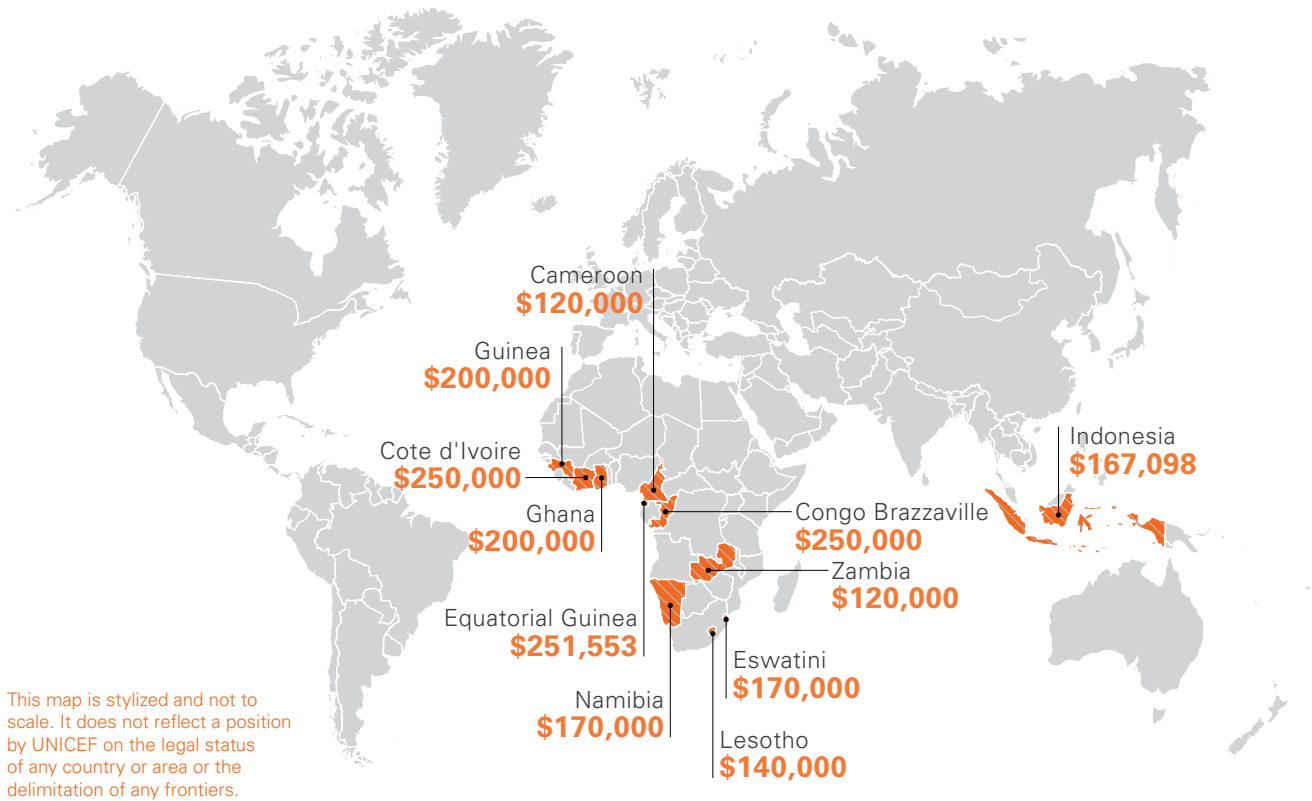
Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

adolescents, including through strengthening primary health-care at community and facility levels so that services are closer to the people who need them. Working in this ‘big picture’ way is a more sustainable and cost-effective response to the HIV epidemic.

Allocations

In 2023, supporters of the Global HIV and AIDS Thematic Fund enabled UNICEF to allocate resources to 45 countries and territories. The map shows the countries which received the highest allocations.

Funds were allocated to countries based on criteria including HIV prevalence among pregnant women, children, and adolescents; numbers of AIDS-related deaths; number of new infections among adolescents and pregnant women; level of response efforts; and funding needs. In addition, innovative, catalytic interventions were supported in priority countries.



Ghana

In 2023, UNICEF allocated \$200,000 from the Global HIV and AIDS Thematic Fund to support activities to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV at national and sub-national levels. UNICEF also helped build capacity of service providers to strengthen HIV Point of Care for early infant diagnosis and viral load scale up; and to identify children and adolescents living with HIV for treatment through family-based HIV testing (index case testing).

India

An allocation of \$115,000 from the Global HIV and AIDS Thematic Fund supported the country's work to eliminate vertical transmission of HIV, including development of national guidelines for fast tracking elimination of mother-to-child transmission in seven high burden priority states in India, and capacity building for teams at state level.

Jamaica

In 2023, \$40,000 from the Global HIV and AIDS Thematic Fund contributed to efforts to scale up the Teen Hub model in St. Thomas, a geographical area with high rates of poverty, adolescent pregnancy and sexual abuse against girls. Specifically, funds supported the launch of the "Yute Chatz" chatbot, accessible through UNICEF's U-Report Platform, targeting young people aged 13–24 with real-time, accurate and age-appropriate information, and improving knowledge and access to sexual and reproductive health and mental health services.

Philippines

With UNICEF support, including \$105,000 from the Global HIV and AIDS Thematic Fund, local health systems have started implementing accessible, responsive and high-quality adolescent-friendly health services. Multi-sector health-care provider networks are now working at sub-national level to address adolescent pregnancy, mental health, HIV and sexually transmitted infections.

Mozambique

An allocation of \$60,000 from the Global HIV and AIDS Thematic Fund supported evidence generation to expand HIV services, including a study on data disaggregation of adolescent and young people using adolescent-friendly centres to determine the most relevant programming for the adolescents attending those centres.

Regional and global programming

While over three-quarters of allocations from the Global HIV and AIDS Thematic Fund went directly to country programmes in 2023, resources were also used to support UNICEF programming across wider regions and globally. These vital allocations of flexible funding enable the Thematic Fund to have an impact far beyond the countries that receive direct allocations.

Just over \$860,000 was allocated across UNICEF's seven regional offices, covering East Asia and the Pacific, Eastern and Southern Africa, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, and West and Central Africa. These offices play a crucial role providing technical support for HIV programmes in the countries of their region. They also help to coordinate HIV and sexual and reproductive health

programmes by leveraging partnerships with other United Nations agencies, such as UNAIDS, the UNFPA and the WHO. This helps strengthen collaboration and cooperation for better results, and provides opportunities for South-South learning. In 2023, the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office and the West and Central Africa Regional Office received the most funds, with both receiving close to \$200,000.

Resources from the Global HIV and AIDS Thematic Fund allocated to global level, totalling just over \$540,000, enabled UNICEF to provide leadership and set priorities for the global HIV response. The funds allowed UNICEF to invest in critical partnerships, leverage resources for national responses, and provide technical expertise in data programming and advocacy among other areas to ensure that all children, adolescents and pregnant women living with and at risk of HIV in all countries are reached. The global HIV team also ensures that issues faced by women, children and adolescents affected by HIV remain visible at international health and HIV gatherings and through key advocacy moments, including World AIDS Day (1 December), the International Day of the Girl Child (11 October), and World Children's Day (20 November).



Catarina (20 years old) and her son Wilter (5 years old) in Matola, Mozambique. Catarina is a peer mentor in her community after learning about her HIV status during pregnancy a few years ago.

Achieving results for systems strengthening

Thematic funds are a vital cornerstone of UNICEF's systems-strengthening work to unlock lasting impact for children. But this takes time. This is why resources from the Global HIV and AIDS Thematic Fund are spent over a four-year period, aligning with UNICEF's Strategic Plan (2022–2025).

As the world's largest organization for children, UNICEF drives results for HIV treatment, prevention and care at scale across 37 HIV high-burden, priority countries every year. Below are some headline sector-level results, for which thematic funding was a key contributor, as part of an overall portfolio of funding.

Workforce

A key element of UNICEF's HIV Strategy is ensuring that health services are friendly and welcoming for young people. For instance, UNICEF trains young people living with HIV to support peers to improve their drug adherence and ensure that the HIV virus is suppressed.

- In 2023, UNICEF South Africa supported the scaling up of the adolescent girl and young women peer mentor programme from one district in 2017 to seven in 2023. The government now recruits and provides stipends for peer mentors in KwaZulu Natal, reaching more than 41,000 adolescents and young women, many of whom are living with HIV and on treatment.

Laws and policies

UNICEF works with governments to strengthen laws and policies on HIV. One key priority is strengthening policies for eliminating mother-to-child transmission of both HIV and syphilis, a core objective for UNICEF. This double-elimination initiative maximizes impact by addressing two issues at once.

- Working with its partners in the Joint Programme, UNICEF provides guidance and technical support to countries to refine and implement their national plans for eliminating vertical transmission of HIV, alongside the elimination of syphilis and hepatitis B. By 2023, 15 countries and territories have been certified as having halted vertical transmission of HIV and syphilis. Thirty-six out of 37 UNICEF priority countries now have policies and services for the dual elimination of HIV and syphilis.

Social and behaviour change

Social and behaviour change programming works to shift knowledge and attitudes on key issues. For instance, knowing that gender inequality drives HIV in many places,

UNICEF works to shift gender norms that put some populations at risk, often using creative methods such as social media and radio dramas.

- In 2023, UNICEF continued to implement the Ground Up! Initiative, which aims to support the leadership of youth-led HIV and sexual and reproductive health and rights networks across six countries in Eastern and Southern Africa. The networks meet virtually every month to share challenges, resources, and ideas for collaboration. Webinars, live social media events, sharing advocacy strategies and learning opportunities, and an online repository of resources are just some of the digital approaches Ground Up! is using to provide virtual support to networks of adolescents and young people living with HIV throughout the region.

Data

UNICEF supports routine gathering and analysis of data on HIV that is age and sex disaggregated. This allows governments and partners to allocate resources to programmes that are evidence-based and responsive to the needs of children, adolescents and pregnant women. When data are not available, UNICEF works with governments to strengthen their systems so that the data can be gathered and analysed.

- UNICEF's HIV Data Mentoring Programme focuses on preventing vertical transmission of HIV for countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The programme continued to expand in 2023, building national capacity through South-South and triangular learning approaches and peer mentorship to strengthen national health-management information systems for countries on the path to eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV, syphilis and hepatitis B. In 2023, 26 countries participated in the programme – 8 in Eastern and Southern Africa and 18 in West and Central Africa – and demand continues to grow.

Supply chains

Supplies and commodities are a key part of UNICEF's work on HIV. This includes rapid diagnostic tests and antiretroviral medicines. As well as delivering supplies, UNICEF also strengthens the supply chains themselves, so that lifesaving commodities can always be available for the countries that need them, including in humanitarian contexts.

In 2023, UNICEF continued to support the collection and analysis of nuanced data used by programmes to remove service barriers and enhance service quality. The work includes introducing and managing data dashboards to track epidemic trends, medicine and other supply stocks and indicators of programme performance at local levels. UNICEF continues to roll out the Paediatric Service Delivery Framework, which lays out data-mapping processes to pinpoint gaps in treatment services for children, including stock levels for antiretroviral medicines.

Targets

To measure the long-term impact of strengthening systems for HIV treatment and prevention, UNICEF monitors several key indicators, as illustrated in the table below.

Indicator	Baseline (2021)	Progress (2023)	Target (2025)
Workforce Number of countries implementing a comprehensive package of interventions for paediatric HIV treatment as part of primary health-care	31 (HIV priority countries)	34	37 (HIV priority countries)
Laws and policies Number of countries with at least dual mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis elimination policies and services	32 (HIV priority countries)	36	37 (HIV priority countries)
Supply chains Percentage of children living with HIV who receive antiretroviral therapy	52%	57%	95%
Social and behaviour change Number of countries in which UNICEF is supporting combination HIV-prevention interventions, including pre-exposure prophylaxis, targeting adolescent girls and young women and/or adolescent and young key populations	33 (HIV priority countries)	32*	37 (HIV priority countries)

* Reporting reflects that countries with low prevalence and HIV burden in older populations are focusing on elimination of vertical transmission.

Impact story

UNICEF Data Mentoring Programme

Globally, vertical transmission of HIV fell significantly from 23 per cent in 2010 to 11 per cent in 2022, but progress has stagnated in recent years. UNICEF data analysis shows that a growing proportion of new HIV infections in children occur when pregnant women acquire HIV during pregnancy or the breastfeeding period but are not diagnosed and treated. Recognizing the importance of high-quality data for identifying and addressing gaps to preventing vertical transmission and paediatric AIDS, UNICEF launched a Data Mentoring Programme in late 2021.

The overall goal of the programme is to build local capacity and strengthen national health management information systems to support high-burden countries in Africa. Specifically, the programme is intended to improve data quality by building the analytical skills of government staff to identify and address key information gaps, analyse data, and use the findings to better plan and sharpen programming to prevent vertical transmission of HIV, syphilis and hepatitis.

This 14-week mentorship programme – with dedicated office hours, live sessions, online lessons and support – is transformational in the way it equips mentees with practical skills for handling, managing, visualizing, and presenting data on prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT). The programme employs a South-South and triangular learning approach, where mentees from different

countries are supported to learn from the experiences of their colleagues and mentors from the global North and South.

As part of the programme in 2023, UNICEF conducted an intensive data deep dive workshop in the United Republic of Tanzania, focused on improving the quality of data related to vertical transmission and triangulation using estimates and administrative and survey data.

“The UNICEF workshop enabled much deeper understanding of the available data. Now we are better able to interpret data to inform development of targeted interventions and the roadmap for the Pathway to Elimination,” said Dr Michael Msangi, Head of PMTCT Programme, Ministry of Health, United Republic of Tanzania.

Workshop insights have guided the United Republic of Tanzania’s new plan to establish a National Validation Committee and roll out the training across the country.

UNICEF’s Data Mentoring Programme has so far trained more than 50 mentees across 13 countries (Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire, Eswatini, Lesotho, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) to gather and leverage data to support the pathway to elimination.



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UNICEF’s Data Mentoring Programme in countries like Uganda supports governments to target their elimination of HIV vertical transmission programming for women such as Phiona (38), to ensure their children are HIV-free.

Hearing from our donors and partners

The Korean Committee for UNICEF working to end AIDS in children by 2030

Serving as the public face and voice of UNICEF in the countries where they work, National Committees work tirelessly to raise funds from the private sector, promote children's rights, and secure worldwide visibility for children threatened by poverty, disasters, armed conflict, abuse and exploitation.

The Korean Committee for UNICEF has been a longstanding supporter of the HIV programme and is a significant donor to the Global HIV and AIDS Thematic Fund.

Since the 1950s and UNICEF's initial presence in the country supporting children in the aftermath of war, the Republic of Korea has cemented its status as a main contributor to UNICEF and the child rights agenda. UNICEF is extremely grateful to the Korean people for their steadfast support, not only for the HIV programme, but also as champions of the rights and well-being of all children around the world.

Thematic resources are key to UNICEF's ability to reach its targets set out in the Strategic Plan 2022–2025, and to continue essential HIV services in the context of the SDGs and emerging global public health threats, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. With the support of the Korean people, during the pandemic UNICEF was able to continue testing children and pregnant women for HIV by simplifying complex diagnostic systems, ensuring mothers do not pass on the virus to their infants. UNICEF used innovative technologies to deliver results, even amid global lockdowns, to avoid delays in starting life-saving medications for children. UNICEF is working hard to find better medicine for infants and link babies living with HIV to lifelong support systems.

Working in 37 priority countries, UNICEF strives for impact and efficiency in primary health-care by supporting community systems; strengthening access to quality HIV treatment, prevention and care and sexual and reproductive health services; and ensuring that programmes, especially for adolescent girls, include additional components to enhance people's health and well-being.

The goal to end AIDS in children by 2030 is fast approaching. Yet many challenges persist; for example, more than half of children under 4 years of age living with HIV are not receiving the antiretroviral drugs they need.



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Dayyiba Ahmad, 24, a UNICEF Community Volunteer Tester in Ungwa Rimi PHC, Kaduna State on July 9, 2024. Dayyiba, lost her aunty to HIV virus and is motivated to spread the awareness throughout her community, thanks to the platform provided by UNICEF.

Thanks to the support of 11,000 individual donors in the Republic of Korea, UNICEF remains undeterred in its mission, confident in the knowledge that together, getting to the finish line is possible.

Spotlight on the Global HIV and Aids Thematic Fund

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